

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTO 02784 232046Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4663
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY
USINT HAVANA PRIORITY
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 2784

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PEPER, PINS, DR
SUBJECT: PRD CONSTERNATION OVER PENA GOMEZ NYT INTERVIEW

REF SANTO DOMINGO 2759

1. IN A MAY 22 PRESS CONFERENCE, JORGE BLANCO, PRESIDENT OF THE PARTIDO REVOLUCIONARIO DOMINICANO (PRD), ACCOMPANIED BY OTHER PARTY LEADERS, ATTEMPTED TO CLARIFY A STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO THE PARTY'S SECRETARY GENERAL, JOSE FRANCISCO PENA GOMEZ BY NEW YORK TIMES REPORTER JON NORDHEIMER. THIS STATEMENT FOLLOWED AN EARLIER ONE ON THE SUBJECT BY GUZMAN (REFTEL. IN THE MAY 21 ARTICLE PENA IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE PRD WOULD BRING ABOUT A "SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS."

2. THE REMARK WAS HEADLINED IN THE MAY 22 EL CARIBE, UNDER NORDHEIMER'S BYLINE SUPPLIED BY THE NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE.
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PAGE 02 SANTO 02784 232046Z

JORGE BLANCO MAINTAINED THAT THE REPORTER OMITTED THE WORD "DEMOCRATIC" USED BY PENA IN REFERENCE TO SOCIALST GOVERNMENT AND TO PROVE HIS POINT, PLAYED A TAPE OF THE INTERVIEW. PENA, BLANCO FURTHER EMPHASIZED, HAD STATED THAT SOCIALISM AS PRACTICED IN CUBA AND THAT ADVOCATED BY THE PRD ARE FUNAMENTALLY DIFFERENT OWING TO THE FACT THAT THE CUBAN VARIETY IS BASED ON MARXISM WHILE THE PRD IS FIRMLY ROOTED IN DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES. THE

PRD, HE ADDED, IS COMMITTED TO THE TYPE OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY PREVALENT IN EUROPE AND VENEZUELA. JORGE BLANCO STATED THAT HE WOULD REQUEST THE NEW YORK TIMES TO ISSUE A CLARIFYING STATEMENT.

3. IN FURTHER PARTY REACTION TO THE ARTICLE, PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ANTONIO GUZMAN ISSUED A WRITTEN STATEMENT SAYING THAT "UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES" WOULD HE FORM A GOVERNMENT OF A "SOCIALIST CUT." IN RESPONSE TO THE REMARK ATTRIBUTED TO PENA THAT A PRD GOVERNMENT WOULD "PROBABLY" OPEN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH CUBA, GUZMAN MAINTAINED THAT RELATIONS WOULD CONTINUE AS THEY HAD UNDER BALAGUER'S GOVERNMENT (I.E., CULTURAL AND SPORTS TIES, CO-MEMBERSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL GROUPINGS, BUT NOT FORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS). IN AN INTERVIEW WITH UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL, THE PRD STANDARD-BEARER PREVIOUSLY STATED THAT HE WOULD NOT RE-ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH CUBA BEFORE THE UNITED STATES DID SO. IN THE SAME INTERVIEW, GUZMAN ASSERTED, "I AM THE PRESIDENT. PENA GOMEZ WILL CONTINUE AS SECRETARY GENERAL, AT LEAST IN THE BEGINNING OF MY ADMINISTRATION AND THE PARTY WILL BE SEPARATED FROM THE GOVERNMENT."

4. EL CARIBE, MEANWHILE, STUCK TO THE NORDHEIMER INTERVIEW. IN A MAY 23 EDITORIAL, THE DAILY MAINTAINED THAT THE INTERVIEW TAPE, WHICH BLANCE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PAPER, DID NOT CHANGE THE ESSENTIAL MEANING OF THE STATEMENT AS IT APPEARED IN THE STORY. IF THE TIMES ISSUED A CLARIFYING STATEMENT, HOWEVER, THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SANTO 02784 232046Z

PAPER INDICATED IT WOULD PRINT IT.

5. COMMENT. THE PRD OBVIOUSLY IS CONCERNED THAT UNTOWARD OR MISINTERPRETED STATEMENTS, PARTICULARLY BY PENA, WILL PLAY INTO THE HANDS OF INDIVIDUALS IN REFORMISTA RANKS WHO ARE CONDUCTING THE PRESENT CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT THE PRD AND WHAT IS BELIEVED TO BE THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS. PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE IS THE RESURRECTION OF THE OLD LINE THAT THE PRD ARE "COMMUNISTS." AT A TIME THAT IT APPEARS THE MILITARY IS RESIGNED TO RESPECTING THE ELECTORAL OUTCOME, SUCH SMEAR ATTEMPTS ARE FEARED BY THE PRD AS BEING INCITEFUL OF ELEMENTS WITHIN THE MILITARY. ASIDE FROM PROMINENT PLAY OF THE TIMES STORY, CHARGES HAVE ALSO CIRCULATED IN THE LAST FEW DAYS ALLEGING THAT FIDEL CASTRO MADE A PERSONAL CALL TO PENA GOMEZ OFFERING TO SEND TROOPS TO THE DR; ANOTHER VERSION OF THE "CUBAN CONNECTION" RUMOR, REPORTEDLY BEING SPREAD BY PEOPLE IN THE GOVERNMENT, IS THAT FIDEL GAVE THE PRD \$2 MILLION SO IT COULD PERPETRATE FRAUD IN THE MAY 16 ELECTIONS.

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Message Attributes

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